

AN ADDRESS

TO

THE FRIENDS

OF

NEGRO EMANCIPATION,

IN

LIVERPOOL.

LIVERPOOL :
PRINTED BY RUSHTON AND MELLING, POOL LANE.

1824.

TO THE FRIENDS
OF
NEGRO EMANCIPATION.

WHEN an individual, one from amongst yourselves, who has no particular claim to attention, feels himself compelled to press his ideas upon your notice, and to assume an air of remonstrance in his expressions, which, under any common circumstances, would be unbecoming; when such is the case, he naturally seeks an excuse for the apparent temerity of the proceeding in the importance of the subject, and willingly submits to the imputation of individual rashness if he can hope to ensure a public good.

For my own part I feel, that upon the subject to which I beg leave to call your attention, there is no one town or city in Great Britain from whence an expression of public indignation would come with so good a grace as from Liverpool. This town has long been accused of favouring the odious system of negro slavery, and from no place on earth would an abhorrence at its continuation be more becoming, or more beneficial at the present time. A remonstrance from the inhabitants of this town, at this juncture, upon this question, would be at once both honourable to themselves and useful to humanity.

The means by which I purpose to put you in possession of my sentiments are, first, by taking into consideration the right by which the West India proprietors say they possess a property in the person of the slave; and next, by commenting upon a debate in Parliament which took place upon the 16th of last month, on the same subject.

With respect to the claims of the West India proprietors I proceed to state, that a meeting of the proprietors, &c. took place some weeks since in London, in order to take into consideration what means they ought to adopt to secure their own interests. The sympathies of the British people have long been

wounded by contemplating the cruelties practised in these colonies, and a hope of the emancipation of the negroes has been harboured pretty generally throughout the kingdom. The wealth of the West India proprietors, &c. consists mainly in the possession, and in the labour of these slaves; and these proprietors, thinking their property in danger of being confiscated, for reasons which they neither felt nor admitted, they came to the determination to draw up a set of resolutions to the King, in which they freely stated what they call their wrongs; and these resolutions being now made public, I take the liberty of giving you my ideas upon the truth or falsehood they contain.

I have no interest whatever in the question, except as far as humanity and justice are concerned, and shall be as plain and as concise as my own understanding and the nature of the subject will permit. And at the outset I freely confess, that if any one can prove that these slaves are the property of the planters, if this be fairly proved, I do freely say, that those planters are entitled to full compensation for any loss they may suffer by their emancipation: for if the slaves be their property, then are we, by meddling with their goods, doing them and the cause of justice a manifest injury. But I also say, that if the slaves be not the property, not only of the planters or proprietors, but of any one breathing, then are they the most insolent robbers that ever appeared in a court of justice, and we the most pusillanimous of people for listening with patience to their demands for one moment.

It seems to me that the whole pith of the argument lies in one simple question, "Are the slaves the property of these men?" And as this question is answered in the affirmative or in the negative, just so must those planters meet with our sympathy, or encounter our detestation. And so now to the proof. I say then, that man cannot justly become the property of man. There is no earthly power, king, potentate, prince, or parliament, which can justly grant protection to one set of men in enslaving the persons of another set of men; and, moreover, there is no set of men, be they planters or peers, who can justly act under any such grant, because the grant being in itself unjust, they are consequently unjust in putting such a grant into force. And the reasoning by which I mean to prove such injustice is as follows:—

It is as natural for man, be he black or white, to wish to amass property for himself and for his children, as it is for him to breathe or to think; he constantly feels this inclination when he is enslaved, although he dare not express it; he wishes the fruit of his own toil to be at his own disposal: he is everlast-

ingly prompted by these feelings ; and when any one violates them, by enslaving him, or by withholding from his children, during life, that liberty which Nature meant all men equally to enjoy ; this oppressor, be he who he will, be he king or planter, although innocent of the original outrage, is hourly, daily, and yearly, in the constant infliction of fresh injury. It is not that by seizing the slave, tearing him from home and children, it is not in so doing that the planter has acted like a tyrant ; and that by kindly treating his slaves afterwards he can compensate for this barbarity : this is not the state of the case at all. It is, that a system has commenced in theft, which is perpetuated in cruelty ; for so long as that race is continued in that condition which outrage reduced them to at first, so long as they are continued in this state, just so long does the original crime increase with a force accumulated by the delay of their emancipation. The first injury, where a moral agent is the sufferer, can never be forgotten, and never ceases to be felt so long as he suffers under its effects ; because it is the very nature of a reasoning being to be constantly alive to his own degradation, and to be as constantly aspiring to those privileges from which his state of subjection excludes him.

One of the main distinctions between instinctive animal life and reasoning beings is this :—I may become possessed of property, including cattle, &c. by unjust means, and yet time, custom, and that very possession may render them my own, because the original owner having relinquished them, my claim to them is as good as that of any one else around me. By bestowing labour and care upon property of this nature I become identified with it—the property itself not having the sympathies and affections of reasoning beings, by not being by nature elevated into the rank of moral agents, this kind of property, I say, feels not any injury in a change of masters, and is as content in my hands as in those of another, and until claimed by the original owner, I have as good a right to it as any one else, and am, by like reasoning, guilty of no greater crime than one single act of injustice at first. But how mightily does the matter alter if I make a reasoning man a slave ! he not only feels the wrong at first, but he and his children continue to feel it every instant, because their desires are by nature of such a kind as to make them feel it ; they never, for one moment, relapse into content ; they aspire hourly to property of their own ; and thus I am daily doing as great an outrage as I at first committed, so long as they remain slaves to toil for my profit. I have been led into these considerations from observing that these impudent planters insult the king, by declaring that their right to the slaves is as good as his right to his dominions ; and because I see

that Mr. Canning seems to consider the slaves not as men, but as brutes who dare not look upwards until he thinks fit, or as his hackneyed quotation from Ovid says,*

Cœlumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

These are the reasons which I judge sufficient to prove the injustice of the grant, and consequently the injustice of the planters' claims for redress. When the foundation fails the superstructure falls. That acts of Parliament are enacted, altered, and repealed, we all know. Why did not these men assert and insist upon their right to continue the slave-trade? Was not that traffic once considered a national privilege?—Is it not now proclaimed a stigma on the character of the country? Or rather, are not these the very men from whose unwilling hands that beastly power was wrested?

But where is the difference between breeding slaves and stealing men? Will these cruel men tell us that these slaves, because born in slavery, are like birds nursed in captivity, unacquainted even with a desire of liberty? Will they thus fortify their reasoning by the very arguments which confirm their own disgrace? How come they to have lost all idea of liberty, but by the outrage of their very nature? But if so, why all this needless loss of our best troops? Why this deadly retribution which is yearly inflicted upon those who are sent to keep them in subjection? Whence this enormous expense to prosecute a system at once destructive to the morals and ruinous to the interests of the mother country? The principle was established in bloodshed, and the system is propagated by barbarity, and to adopt the one, or pursue the other, requires the heart of a tiger, and the disposition of a demon. Away with all abominable cant, and cruel calculation.—It requires only plain sense and common feeling to make any honest man start from such acts, as he would from a serpent or from a pestilence. There is no power on earth which can legalize crime. Crime is such by whomsoever committed. Our just abhorrence at such proceedings springs from a source which we do well to protect; there lives not a brute in creation but possesses every other attribute in common with us; these are alone the feelings which dignify our existence, and to repress or qualify them is to be guilty of that prostration of soul which any earthly potentate ought to tremble to demand.

* Mr. Canning's Latin has a strong taste of the Birch about it, being generally borrowed from the earliest books of Ovid or of Virgil. To be sure he did once quote Lucretius, but I suspect him of having found the quotation in a work of Mr. P. Knight's, it was lugged in so unmercifully.

You will easily see, if the foregoing reasoning be just, the dreadful error we commit when we consider man as the property of man. It seems to me that he must labour under a blindness of brains, who can affirm that any government could with justice grant such protection to these planters, or that the planters themselves are entitled to compensation for any pecuniary loss which they may incur by the emancipation of their fellow-creatures.

I do contend, that if the slaves were treated with all the dainties of the earth, yet still those planters have no right to deny them their liberty: they cannot go where they like, nor when they choose: their actions, however just, however honest, are under the control of others;—in short, they are slaves. This ought not to be tolerated, if they were ever so well used; but it requires no great stretch of thought to find out, that it is the planters' interest to work these negroes as much as possible, and we well know what lengths rapacity will carry men in England, among what are called free-born men; and what sort of conduct we need to expect from those planters abroad, whose wealth consists in the toil of these poor defenceless beings, I leave you to judge.

My pen recoils from the very mention of what has hitherto been the consequence of this power over the slave—burnings, brandings, lashing, torture, poverty, and toil: these things have hitherto been the slave's punishment for the crime of being black, for refusing to obey, and for presuming to regain his liberty. I cannot help quoting an instance for the sake of illustration here. I copy it from the speech of Mr. Buxton, made in the House of Commons, and reported in the *Times* Newspaper of March 17th. This barbarity did not take place thirty years ago; no, it happened in Demerara about the month of August, 1823; that year of general enlightening and high civilization; it happened in August last, when churches were building all over England to promulgate a religion of universal charity. It is as follows: "In August last there was a man slave on an estate called Clonbrook, whose name was Billy. This man had lived with one woman, as his wife, for nineteen years, and had by her a family of thirteen children. The proprietor of the estate, a Mr. Rodder, died, and his two sons divided the property: they separated the children, and they took the slave from his wife: they placed the slave upon a different estate, and threatened to flog him if he ever went to see his wife or children. This was not all: the slave found that he was advertised for sale himself, and most likely was to be taken to a distance from his wife and children. The day fixed for the sale was the 27th of August; upon the 18th the insurrection

broke out: this slave did what every honest man would do—he joined the insurrection; and this man is now hanging in chains at George Town, in Demerara.” Now what shall we say to this, ye iron-hearted planters? tell us what we ought to say to this? Are we to leave the men who permit these things in possession of these slaves for generations yet to come? Are we, I ask, to pity any one who calls himself a West India planter after this? Are we to be told of their vested rights after this? If the slave be obedient, what is his reward?—perpetual bondage—dreadful drudgery—sufficient diet to maintain his strength to work for their profit; and thus he dies, leaving the melancholy legacy of endless slavery to his children! And yet these planters have the unblushing audacity to demand compensation, if they be made free. Are we to be told that these proprietors did not know that the grant of protection for such atrocity as this was unjust? And are we to witness a plunderer of this description come into court, and demand money for an article which was stolen, and that article a living man! Good God! what is it we see? One man steals another, or inherits him, and his children, when stolen; he comes too to England to demand compensation if he be liberated: he demands money from us, and tells us that we have assisted him in the abominable theft! I deny that the British people did do this—I deny that the grant for protection in such plunder was the act of the British people. Whoever made it, it was unjust, and was as inhumanly granted as it was inhumanly acted upon. Let the planter take his unjust cause into a court of injustice, but let him not bring it before the tribunal of the British people, without us passing our unanimous verdict of utter condemnation upon it. Let him not plead his profligate cause at our bar, but let him take it to some court where power can sway justice.

The fathers of these slaves were stolen from their native country—their sons are still plundered of their natural freedom, and of the fruits of their own industry. The people of England, roused to a sense of the disgrace, call for redress; they find the pledge in the hands of these proprietors and planters, who, brandishing the bond, like Shylock in the play, maintain their right to it under an act of parliament, and demand compensation before they surrender the sufferer.—This is the fact. I say then, let those who committed the outrage settle the matter, as is usual in like cases, with mutual recriminations; but let the first step be the release of the slave, let not his person be held in PAWN whilst his oppressors coolly argue their respective claims. Let not a weak and unoffending individual, who has been plundered of his birthright,—let him not, I say, whilst he pleads for his own, be forced to listen to protestations of inno-

cence from two powerful ruffians, whilst he finds himself the victim of their joint brutality. Look at him catching with anxious expectation at the welcome sounds of emancipation ;—look at him retreating again into the slave as he listens to the grumbling of disappointed rapacity. Look at that picture, ye who would pause for generations yet to come, and then boast of civilization, if you have the brazened hardihood to do so !

Let the planters' rights be contrasted with the negroes' wrongs, and see what sympathy they can expect. For my own part, I feel any thing but a feeling of sympathy for them. All the resolutions of these planters are contaminated with this odious principle of property in the slave. This principle I deny, and therefore consider the whole a tissue of barefaced impudence, atrocity, and falsehood. Our interest is to get the slaves out of their hands, and to make them free. There is no one feeling produces more moral degradation, and physical wretchedness, than a misplaced lenity. A plain and unqualified abhorrence at such a system is called for from us. We owe it to ourselves, to humanity, honour, truth, and justice, to give one unanimous expression of detestation at such iniquity ; and, as the task of pronouncing public sentence upon criminals is always unpleasant, the sooner it be done the better.

Let us leave this odious carcase of slavery in the hands of those Spaniards whose cruel ancestors first gave it life. Humanity shudders at the sight—reason retires from it in disgust, and even policy has at last relinquished it, as at best but burthensome to bear. Let us bury the shocking spectacle—let the chief mourners be West India proprietors, and let one simultaneous shout of 800,000 liberated sufferers attend its descent into those regions, where cruelty, power, and even hypocrisy, can no longer avail it.

And now let us turn to consider the debate in parliament. Last Session a distinct pledge was given by the ministers, that when Parliament next met, some specific measures would be adopted for the general benefit of the negroes in our colonies. Every humane mind has waited this period with an anxiety of expectation proportioned to the dreadful responsibility of the delay. Rejoiced that the moment of at least comparative deliverance had arrived, we waited the intelligence of the public prints as the harbingers of the welcome confirmation of our hopes ; and find, ah ! sad to tell ! we find in them only disappointment and despair. The heavy hand of oppression again dashes the cup of relief from the sufferers' lips ; again we see the door of disappointment shut upon him ; again are we insulted with a tedious display of lengthened oratory ; and again

do we find plebeian suffering left to the issue of experimental expediency, and the rights of this unhappy race sacrificed at the shrine of individual profit. Let us wander through the melancholy periods which preclude every hope from this quarter ; let us prove our sincerity at least by courageously exposing the foes of justice, though we find them as powerful as they are faithless.

And first comes the great Mr. Canning, the orator, the scholar, the any thing but the plain-dealing man. Around him sit a chosen band of brothers ; from among these he rises, and in midnight meditation gives a lengthened speech, which as I find reported in the *Times* newspaper, I shall remark upon. The part of it which first excites my attention is, where this gentleman talks of " driving the ploughshare over property so sacred as that which the planter possesses." To drive the ploughshare into the earth, one can understand ; but to talk of driving the ploughshare over " sacred property," meaning the slaves, is stupid and ridiculous declamation. And " sacred property," too ! It is come to a fine pass, when a set of gentlemen can be made to believe that a property in living men is sacred ! He says " these are the principles on which his Majesty's government had acted, and upon which they wished to be judged."

Well, let us look at these principles upon which he says his Majesty's government have acted. I shall proceed, as usual, upon the rule and plummet plan : I shall not bother my brains about state expediency, as it is called, which ought more commonly to be called state rascality. These principles appear to me to be the queerest principles that ever I heard of : they have established the bodies of eight hundred thousand living human beings as a " sacred property" for these planters. They make MAN a marketable commodity ; they buy him, and they sell him ; they tear him from wife and children ; they give to a man the understanding of an infant ; they deny him to rank amongst his fellow-creatures ; they brand him with hot irons ; they lash the trembling flesh of wretched women ; they make one set of men sleep in the dread of nightly assassination ; and they make another set of men ready to cut their throats at a moment's warning. And these are the principles which Mr. Canning boasts of ! All these things these principles do ; and all these things his own reported speech proves, affirms, or confesses that they do ; and yet he says ministers wish to be judged by these principles. I do not know whether ministers wish it or not, but he wishes it, and that is enough for me. I always like to be civil, so he shall have his wish. And my judgment is this,—that if any individual had acted upon these principles which he declares have been acted upon by his Majesty's ministers, he would have

been conducted to a condemned cell in Newgate, and from thence to Surgeon's-hall. So much for his principles !

He next says something about it "being debateable." Debateable ! aye, to be sure it is. Mr. Canning is a rare debater : it was not for nothing that he was prevented from going to India. Debateable indeed ! why he'll sputter away in debate for a whole session, and he can talk Latin like a Roman ; he is as classical as the Tiber ; he'll shuffle, and cut, and caper about like a fencing-master ; he'll parry quarte and tierce, and he'll retire and advance, and play a world of monkey tricks ; but get him to give one effectual thrust in favour of suffering mankind if you can. No, there he's off at a tangent : theory for me, says he ; none of your practice ; that is not my Forte. Le Sage hits him off to a nicety : " C'est t'un bel esprit qui fait le Seigneur en depit de sa basse origine," that is the man : well, let us get on—You say, Mr. Canning, " God forbid that you should ever advocate the principle of permanent slavery," " God forbid," eh ! Why, sir, you do much worse than advocate it ; you establish the principle ; you might as well say—God forbid that I should be a secretary of state. You are a secretary of state, sir, and these slaves are slaves ; and are to be such by your account for generations to come. Bah ! (as Buona-parte said) you quake when you think of the power of these proprietors, not in the colonies,—no ! but some where else that you and I know of ; that's the fact. You say " the affairs of some of the West Indian states are managed by popular assemblies formed as miniatures of our own here."—To which I reply, that I hope these miniatures are not striking likenesses of the full length original portrait. And now come your regulations for the island of Trinidad, containing only 23,000 out of 800,000 slaves ; the female slaves of this island are not to be lashed, and you *recommend* it to the colonists in general not to lash females. Sir, we are not content with this ; we have no predilection for the Trinidad females ; we abhor the practice of lashing trembling girls at all, and wish to see the planters forced by the arm of justice to relinquish the scourge immediately. We care not about your " God forbid," but this we do care about ; we want to know that that cruelty is at an end—that's what we want—we do not care one fig about vested property compared to this. Do you understand that, sir ? Then you say, that " you intend to establish religious worship, the only source of human dignity." Why, sir, you are growing religious.—Come, let us see how far behind you in Christian qualifications these black brutes, as you esteem them, may be ; in the slave we find a living example of that true Christianity inculcated by the Apostle, " he suffereth long and is kind"—" he vaunteth not himself, is not puffed up"—" not easily provoked."

The ten golden rules, the very foundation of the doctrine, are not violated by the slave.—

“Honour thy father and thy mother.”

“Thou shalt not steal.”

“Thou shalt do no murder.”

Have his father and mother been honoured?—Has he not been stolen?—Has he not been murdered? Try his Christianity by this measure, and see if he be not found pretty orthodox in his creed when compared with his pale-faced persecutors. Eh! What think you, Mr. Parodist? You “fear you must still use the word SALES when speaking of the transfer of slaves from one proprietor to another.” You fear you must.—Why you know you must.—What miserable whining foppery is this? Out with it, sir,—sales it is, and sales it will be for any thing you’ll do to alter the term. And so you are going “to establish banks in which the little savings of slaves may be accumulated.” What are you there,—Old Truepenny? You are going to lay your ungodly hands on their “little savings” next, are you? Bank notes for pistoles, I suppose? “Little savings!”—little enough, I believe. You’ve still an eye to business with all your learning, I find. So I see that you intend to prevent the slave from working for his own benefit upon Sunday; that I see plain enough: and you tell those of Trinidad that you will permit them to purchase their freedom. George Canning, of Glosster Lodge, Chelsea, will permit a man to purchase *himself*!—Well! thank you for so much. But how, I ask, is he to do this?—For out of the confusion of this order in council I cannot find that you have given him another day to himself—I cannot find any thing of this kind. To be sure you recommend,—aye! aye! you recommend it to the planter to give him some other day to himself; but that the planter will listen to your recommendation is another question; if he do, he will contradict our past experience of him. Do contemplate this fact.—One man steals the person of another, and then demands money if he release him; and we find it made an act of favour and a matter of congratulation if his wife or daughter be not flogged by him who robbed, is robbing, and will rob them of their liberty and industry. This may be Mr. Canning’s kind of Christianity; but verily I do say it does not look much like Humanity. Such hyæna doctrine I never heard; and it seems to me to be the mercy of a half-famished tigress, rather than the favour we might expect from a Latin scholar, and a son of the muses;—this is “*Erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*” with a vengeance. I should like to know who dared to make men “*ad humum vertere vultus*.”

One instance or two more of the “os sublime.” Now listen—

this surpasses all that ever yet was heard—he asks whether “it would not be galling to the parent to know that his child was destined to enjoy the inestimable blessing of liberty, for which he himself must sigh in vain.” There, read that—galling to the parent that his child was destined to be free! Galling, does he say? Aye, that he does! and this man is a Right Honourable! One sentence of this kind is as good as a folio volume. Is there a black in Jamaica, married or not married, that would have felt or spoken such a sentiment? Not one. He says the slaves have only “the sense of an infant.” Well, of an infant, sir! I would rather have the sense of an infant, than the feeling of a dirt-rooting hog, any day, whatever Ovid and you may say of your “*cœlumque tueri*.” You must have meant to say, “*scelusque tueri*.” As for your Order in Council, it is a farce; one wild mass of absurdity, and dilatory contradiction. The slave is worse off than ever; it is all patch-work, and evinces nothing but a state of tremulous hesitation, and tottering timidity. That’s my opinion of it, after your thirty years’ discussion.

These planters say that they possess the slaves by act of parliament. Do they not know, that the same parliament which then made a law of that nature, may now, with a much better face, make a law in favour of justice and humanity? Are we to be constant in nothing but the committal of crime? Is a government to be denied that repentance which we commend in an individual? Are we to pursue a course of iniquity because these planters, who have been the only persons to prosper upon profligacy, are determined to persist in the dreadful career? No! Let the planter contrast his accumulation of gain with his loss of character, but let the British people remember, that to continue negro slavery is to them a pecuniary loss, as well as a moral dereliction, and argues at once not only a want of feeling, but is also a glaring instance of commercial miscalculation.

But again; will the proprietors be the only losers if the slaves be set free? Come, let us have a word or two upon this point. One word in your ear, Mr. Slave-holder. Whisper—Have you not been very busy mortgaging your estates for a long time back? Eh! Mr. Cowskin? What have you been about? You have been mortgaging this “sacred property” of your’s with Jews and others. Is not this so, Mr. Brand’em? I may be wrong; but folks do say you have been dabbling a little in this fashion. So you see, Mr. Middle-passage, that the loss would fall upon Moses as well as you, you cunning dog! I advise you to vest a good deal more of your vested rights with Moses. By all means lay it well into Moses; for Moses being

an heretic, you know no one can possibly think of sympathizing with him : he can always get a living among oranges and sealing wax. I never knew one of that God-forgotten race yet, who did not manage to make a living out of us believers, from Rothchild down to the dealers in old *clothes* inclusive.

Why, Mr. Slaveholder, the only parliamentary acknowledgment of slaves being property, cited by Lord Bathurst, is an indirect one in the Slavery Registry Bill, passed only two or three years ago, and which bill has been repealed the last year by the Colonial Legislature of Jamaica ; so that even according to my Lord Bathurst's reckoning, Mr. Planter, you have no property in the slaves. But no parliament ever had a right to make those slaves your property : it was only one of the liberties taken by Englishmen with other people. You have no more right with the slaves, than I have to harness you, Mr. Planter, in my gig, and sitting gravely behind you, to lash you along the streets of Liverpool. Or if this be not to your taste, how would you like to have MUNGO printed with hot irons upon your face and shoulders ? You West Indian folks are fond of shew ; how would you like to shew your alphabetical face in the streets of Liverpool, all belettered with capital characters ? Eh ! how would you like your faces to be perused as folks passed by ?

But really I beg your pardon, Gentlemen Colonists, for daring to speak plain truth to you ; for your power must be very great. Mr. Canning seems to feel it. He trembles every inch of him when he speaks of you—he allows government to be twitted with your scoffs and sneers ; this I see plain enough, although he pretends to treat you lightly ; he talks of your possession of the slave as “ property so sacred.” Sacred !—if that property be sacred, I should like to know what is devilish. I know this, that had I been a Secretary of State, and you had come with a black man in a cage to sell him to me, as you have done to him, I would have given you a flirt on the nose which should have brought the tears into your eyes.

But instead of this, Mr. Canning says that Government does not contemplate the general emancipation of the slaves for several generations to come. Mr. Canning says, this matter “ has been ONLY thirty years under discussion.” Take note, I say, that after thirty years' discussion, we are told by a Right—a down-right Right Honourable, that Government does not even contemplate the emancipation of the slaves for generations to come ! And so here have we been spurring at them for thirty years, and here is Government, like old Rozinante, not even thinking of starting.—No ; not even contemplating their freedom. Well, this is a pozer. Mr. Canning's speech plainly tells us this.—Gentlemen, says he, you are right ; yes, yes, God forbid that

slavery should last.—Man was meant “*ad sidera tollere vultus*.” Religion is an excellent thing—christianity is charming—liberty is an inestimable blessing, and therefore, this being the case, we have concluded that the slaves shall remain in slavery for generations yet to come!! We have been, says he, in a delightful reverie for “only thirty years.” Ah! do not disturb the “stillness of our stagnation;” let us muse upon it, he adds, for sixty years to come, or peradventure for ninety years to come, and we will send them a bishop or two; and they shall have a nice little bank of their own; and we will recommend them to the mercy of the planters, and they shall only receive twenty-five lashes at a time in Trinidad, which is about one lash less for every year that we have been discussing; and, in short, in about ninety years they may perhaps be permitted “*ad sidera tollere vultus*”!! O rare Mr. Canning! a Daniel! a very Daniel! say I.—Oh, wise and kind old man!

How long are the cries of this suffering people to be answered by a silent shrug of ineffectual condolence? How long are our fears to be allowed to neutralize our endeavours? How long are our energies to be retarded by these cruel insults upon our understandings? To cherish a hope of negro emancipation from Parliament, is to receive—an Order in Council! To expect mercy from the planter, is for the lamb to appeal to the pity of the butcher.

“*Illam ego non tulerim, quæ computat, et scelus ingens
Sana facit.*”

“For those are fiends who crimes from thought begin,
And, cool in mischief, meditate the sin.”

From whence, then, is this wretched race to be benefited? I answer, from no quarter except from the remonstrance of the British people.

This is no party question: it scorns to associate with the contemptible distinctions of a borough election. It does not partake of the mean, diminutive nature of any political consideration: it is a question of the mightiest moment to all mankind, and in which all that can feel can participate: it is a common calamity, and ought to find common friends.

Do we seek for encouragement? We find it in the sacredness of the cause. Do we ask for reward? We meet it in the self-attending approbation of our own minds.

“It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes;
’Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown.”

Let those who have abetted injustice find excuses for cruelty, or daringly deny its daily existence ; but let it be our part, with a zeal suited to the dignity of the cause we maintain, to express our uncompromising abhorrence at a system which we cannot but detest.

No man, or body of men, should be permitted to outrage the simplest, best, and dearest ties of the human heart. No rank should shelter turpitude. General guilt does not create general indemnity, and I, for one, thus shake off the loathsome responsibility by proclaiming myself the enemy of negro slavery, and the willing friend and advocate of a welcome, unqualified, and immediate emancipation.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your's, most respectfully,

MUNGO.

Liverpool, April 12, 1824.